

KACHEMAK DRIVE PATH COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 2, 2010
REGULAR MEETING

Minutes By Dave Brann

A sign up sheet was handed around.

The meeting called to order by Commissioner and Committee Chair Bumpo Bremicker at 5:03 p.m. It was moved and 2nd to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Bremicker reminded people to be recognized by the chair before speaking.

A brief discussion was held (without being recognized by the chair) about adding to the Committee.

Ms. Engebretsen, Planning Technician clarified that the Chair could not appoint new committee members at this meeting. All appointees can be made at a regular meeting of the commission.

There were eight visitors at the meeting, partial names listed below, full names should be available from the sign in sheet.

Chair Bremicker gave a brief overview of goals, to explore the concept and various possibilities of a trail along Kachemak Drive. He noted the Committee's recommendation would be passed on to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. The Commission then could choose whether to pass it on to the City Council.

Following the agenda, the chair called for comments from the visitors.

1. Lynn Burt, lives on Kachemak Drive, would love to see a separated trail, to be shared by all. She lives behind the Auto Clinic and walks in the area often.
2. Catronia Lowe, a cyclist, uses a bike to commute to work and for recreation. She feels a path would increase Homers health and bike-ability. She thought perhaps a separated trail on both sides of the road would be best.
3. Captain Joe Litchfield, stated he is skeptical of anything the city does. He owns land on both sides of the road and was concerned about which side of the road the trail would go on, how it would be paid for and about being asked/forced to give up some of his land.
4. Mike Illg, Homer Community Recreation Director, gave an overview noting all the discussion about a trail is exploratory at this time. He stated nothing is going to happen quick.
5. There were additional comments from a guest not recognized by the chair about deals behind closed doors. Chair Bremicker stated the City Council follows a process open to public comment.
6. Derek Reynolds, cyclist, commuter, bike shop owner. He stated he would feel safer with a widened paved shoulder or a bike path.
7. Ms. Cumming Cummings, Parks & Rec Commissioner, stated she thought Committee members should be identified. Chair Bremicker stated he would follow the agenda allowing visitors to speak first. Robert Archibald stated he was a member of the Parks and Rec. Advisory Commission and was just listening. Comments by the chair, and Ms. Harrauld, Parks & Rec Commissioner, noted she thought the idea was to get both sides of the issues.
8. David Clemens, cyclist and a member of new cycling group in Homer. He stated he feels Kachemak Drive is not safe. He referred to the City Non-motorized trails plan as a good place to start.

Staff Report—Ms. Engebretsen made comments about the State Recreational Land Use Statute and said she was not sure of its value to the group at this point. She commented that easements, such as water and sewer easements does not mean there is also a trail easement, they are specific to their purpose. When asked a question she said a normal road easement is 60 feet but the road right of way varies along Kachemak Drive. The Right of Way belongs to DOT and they would have a say in a roadside trail.

Ms. Harrauld talked about past discussions of placing a trail on top of the existing/proposed sewer line along Kachemak Drive. Ms. Cumming mentioned the power line as one option. Ms. Engebretsen reminded the group that an easement does not mean it is also a trail easement.

Chair Bremicker made comments and there were questions about the Recreational Use Statute, Ms. Engebretsen clarified that it was about easements.

NEW BUSINESS

To develop a strategic plan on how to proceed in exploring the options related to a trail along Kachemak Drive.

In our packet, Deputy City Clerk Renee Krause provided a worksheet for developing a strategic plan. Two of the committee members had filled part of the outline, it was suggested committee members fill out at least the first two items on the plan, a Mission Statement and the Committee is established to:

Ms. Cumming stated she was very concerned about the path going across private property.

Ms. Harrauld suggested a feasibility study to see what the committee wants as a way to make Kachemak Drive safer, perhaps a needs assessment. Mr. Brann commented we should start with a strategic plan on how to proceed before we develop a needs assessment. Dave referenced the trails manual from Minn. With their trail planning project guidelines.

Chair Bremicker stated we could start with either of two sentences:

Do we need it? (a trail)

We do need it.

A comment from Ms. Lowe suggested adding more appointees to the committee.

Ms. Cumming brought up a question about imminent domain. Ms. Engebretsen clarified and said it was highly unlikely that would happen for a trail. Ms. Cumming feels strongly that property owners need to be assured their property won't be taken by force.

Capt. Joe Litchfield wanted to go on record suggesting two things;
Expand the shoulder of the road and get the police department to enforce existing speed limits.
He sees that as a compromise.

Chair Bremicker reviewed the history of the road, from the old dirt road to the new road the was greatly built up, he felt a trail along the shoulder would require a lot of fill, even a shoulder is a major obstacle. Mr. Litchfield mentioned problems with drainage because of the new road. Ms. Engebretsen made comments about a paved lane as opposed to a separated trail. Chair Bremicker felt that there were options available. Mr. Reynolds asked if the road was wider than necessary? Ms. Engebretsen mentioned a figure. Ms. Lowe asked about width of Lake Street. Chair Bremicker felt Kachemak Drive was minimum width.

Ms. Engebretsen said she would research road widths.

Dave Clemens commented that he felt we would need bike lanes on both sides of Kachemak Dr. He said the Ocean Drive bike lane is dangerous. Chair Bremicker felt a separated path was best. Mr. Clemens felt a path separated from the road would be safer.

Chair Bremicker wondered how to proceed. He asked who would like to be on the committee. Ms. Harrauld, Could we advertise, out there? Ms. Engebretsen responded sure. Chair Bremicker stated only Committee members vote. Ms. Harrauld commented maybe others would be interested. Chair Bremicker stated if we can fill the committee now, we should. Ms. Engebretsen commented that a group of twenty is not recommended. Ms. Cumming suggested seven and recommended Capt. Litchfield be on it. There are four current members, we need three more. Other members of the public can comment at any meeting.

Mr. Brann reviewed the schedule of meetings of the committee and the Advisory Commission so people would understand the commitment.

Ms. Cumming noted we can't talk with each other. Mr. Brann mentioned the ethics packet and requirements. Chair Bremicker stated the meetings are open.

Mr. Clemens asked if one of the committee members could be from the cycling group, perhaps a rotating member.

Ms. Lowe asked for clarification about the ethics issues of discussing items with other members of the cycling group by the committee member. She was assured it would be okay. Ms. Cumming wondered if we should wait and would Mr. Litchfield be willing to be on the committee? Mr. Litchfield said sure, the trail would only be used by a dozen or so bikers for two months. Lynn Burt volunteered to be on the committee.

Chair Bremicker wanted to set up the schedule for the next meeting. Mr. Brann mentioned the schedule again, and that a two week notice was required and the Advisory Commission meets every other month. Ms. Harrauld clarified about summer meetings are every month for the Advisory Commission. Ms. Cumming asked if we could meet if we didn't have a quorum, mentioned she felt strongly about private property owners. Ms. Engebretsen said she would check. The meeting was set for Thursday, Dec. 16 at 5:15.

Ms. Engebretsen suggested the public process should be to get the basic information, come up with basic questions and answers then perhaps got to the public with an open house.

Discussion was held between Chair Bremicker, Ms. Engebretsen and Ms. Harrauld.

Ms. Burt said that she uses the East End Bike Trail and would like one on Kachemak Drive. Ms. Harrauld noted in response to a comment, if you build the trail, users will come.

Chair Bremicker said we need to know how many might use the trail, suggested doing a survey of people along Kachemak Drive. Ms. Harrauld said she used to work for a group building a trail around San Francisco Bay. A needs assessment helped to create the trail.

Ms. Cumming talked about Lampert Lake and questioned the ownership. Captain Litchfield said it was the airport and he.

Chair Bremicker asked, What do we need? Mr. Brann responded that a strategic plan is needed.

Mr. Litchfield commented that the mentioned trail is a need. Decide where it will go. Decide how it is to be funded. Chair Bremicker commented about surveying residents of Kachemak Drive and others like the Bay Club did when deciding on whether to build or not. Ms. Engebretsen commented that there are very few funding sources, brainstorming needs to happen.

Discussion ensued between Chair Bremicker, Ms. Cumming, and Ms. Engebretsen about a mission statement and right of way. Ms. Harrauld suggested committee members fill out the strategic plan worksheet before the next meeting.

Ms. Cumming requested each person have time to present their vision of a trail now.

Ms. Burt commented that she was interested in a space comfortable and safe for whoever, not on the road. Ms. Cumming, interested in a floating pathway made of organics on the north side of the road, 5 ft. wide made of poles, boards, wood chips.

Lindsay, from the press, just to observe, lives on Kachemak Drive

Chair Bremicker stated he lives on Kachemak Drive, concerned about safety. Kachemak Drive needs to connect trails, lots of options

Mr. Clemens supports the idea of a safe, non-motorized path from Point A to Point B, it makes sense to connect existing trails. Ms. Harrauld expressed concerns about safety, she put it on the agenda initially as an opportunity to provide access and connect point. She thought it would be simpler than it is. Mr. Brann, ideas cover a wide scope of options from a footpath to a high end trail, we need to look at feasibility, may be impossible but I don't think so. We will need to think outside the box.

Mr. Reynolds asked, "what if we made Kachemak Dr. one way with one lane a bike lane.

Ms. Lowe commented that this was a good thoughtful discussion, suggested a good needs assessment, not just a wish list, something realistic, use city trail plan.

Captain Litchfield, supports bike safety but is philosophically opposed to taking his land away from him for a trail. He will work with the Committee but will resist the taking of his land.

Chair Bremicker commented that he thinks it can be done.

Mr. Brann suggested everyone read the Homer Non-Motorized Trail plan and the Homer Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Engebretsen stated she has copies to loan out.

Brief discussion of ADA, American Disabilities Act requirements for a trail.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30